



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA RECOGNIZING MONTANANS WHO HAVE SERVED AND CONTINUE TO SERVE IN THE MILITARY AND DECLARING 2023-2025 AS THE ERA OF RECOGNITION AND COMMEMORATION OF THE MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD, MONTANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, MONTANA AIR NATIONAL GUARD, U.S. ARMY RESERVE, MARINE CORPS RESERVE, U.S. NAVY RESERVE, AND ALL ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL.

WHEREAS, on July 14, 1867, Montana Territorial Governor Green Clay Smith issued General Order No. 1 in Virginia City, officially authorizing the organization of Montana volunteer forces and formally naming them the First Regiment of Montana Volunteers; and

WHEREAS, in 1885, U.S. House Bill No. 20 passed, authorizing the organization of a national guard for the territory, and the 1st Montana Infantry Regiment, National Guard, mustered its first company in Virginia City; and

WHEREAS, the need for a state militia was recognized, and accordingly, the 1st Montana Infantry Regiment was reorganized as the Montana National Guard under the Territorial Legislative Act entitled "An Act to Organize and Regulate the Militia, Approved March 10, 1887"; and

WHEREAS, on May 2, 1898, the 1st Montana Infantry Regiment volunteered as United States volunteers, and under the command of Colonel Harry C. Kessler, the regiment served in the Spanish-American War and subsequently in the Philippine Insurrection in 1898-1899, in which it participated in seven major battles as part of the overall command of Major General Arthur MacArthur; and

WHEREAS, the 2nd Montana Infantry Regiment, as successor to the 1st Montana Infantry Regiment, participated in the Mexican Border Conflict in 1916, and under the command of Colonel "Dynamite" Dan J. Donohue, its mission was to protect border towns and U.S. holdings along the Arizona border; and

WHEREAS, on August 5, 1917, the 2nd Montana Infantry Regiment was redesignated as the 163rd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Division, and went on to fight in World War I along with many fellow Montanans who volunteered or were conscripted to serve, and according to Joseph Kinsey Howard, "In World War I, more Montana boys marched away in proportion to population than any other state and more than any other state, proportionately, would never march anywhere again...."; and

WHEREAS, the 163rd Infantry Regiment, 41st Infantry Division, responded to the call of 1 year of duty on September 16, 1940, which turned into 5 years of military service during World War II; and

WHEREAS, the Montana National Guard on its return from World War II was reconstituted in 1946 as the 163rd Infantry Regimental Combat Team, Montana Army National Guard; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Air National Guard came into being on June 27, 1947, some 76 years ago when the 186th Fighter Squadron was formed, and the 186th Fighter Squadron later transformed into the 120th Fighter Wing; and

WHEREAS, Montana men and women have proudly served the nation and state in the Korean War (the Unknown War), the Vietnam War, and part of the Cold War period from 1945 to 1991; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, the Montana Army National Guard served the nation as represented by the 103rd Public Affairs Detachment in Southwest Asia during Desert Shield/Desert Storm, along with members of the Montana Air National Guard and over 3,000 Montanan volunteers serving in the active and reserve components; and

WHEREAS, since 2001, more than 5,000 Montanans have deployed in support of overseas operations as part of the Global War on Terror, including Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Spartan Shield, and Operation Inherent Resolve; and

WHEREAS, the Montana National Guard has repeatedly come to our state's aid during major fire seasons such as 2017 and 2021, the 2022 floods, and the COVID-19 response operations at the Montana State Prison and hospitals across the state; and

WHEREAS, the USS Montana submarine was commissioned on June 25, 2022, and carries our state's name around the world in defense of us and the rest of our nation; and

WHEREAS, Montana is home to Malmstrom Air Force Base, nearly 9,000 active duty and reserve military personnel, and over 92,000 veterans, giving it the third highest percentage of veteran residents of any

state; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Army and Air National Guard, composed of men and women throughout Montana, stepped forward by serving their community, state, nation, and world to support peacekeeping missions, security operations, and natural disaster responses; and

WHEREAS, it is fully recognized that these required mobilizations and deployments of Montana Army and Air National Guard members include adverse effects on families, work, and communities due to the temporary loss of the service members, including social and financial costs; and

WHEREAS, the fine tradition of service to Montana and the United States is ably demonstrated by the nearly quarter of a million Montana veterans who have participated in all branches of the service during the past 156 years, and as current military and new veterans they continue to contribute their strength to Montana by providing leadership in business, government, and industry and continue to add value to Montana; and

WHEREAS, it is our duty and responsibility to support them, remember them, and help them in time of need.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the 68th Legislature of the State of Montana recognizes the many Montanans who have served in the past and who currently serve to make Montana and the United States a better place to live.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Legislature declare that 2023-2025 be recognized as the Era of Recognition and Commemoration of the Montana National Guard, Montana Army National Guard, Montana Air National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, U.S. Navy Reserve, and the many active duty military personnel in service to their nation and encourage that expressions of recognition be afforded to all currently serving and military veterans of Montana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send a copy of this resolution to the Governor of Montana, the Department Commander of the American Legion of Montana, the State Commander, the State Senior Vice Commander, the State Junior Vice Commander, and the State Adjutant/Quartermaster of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of Montana, the State Commander of the Disabled American Veterans of Montana, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, each of the federally recognized tribal governments in Montana,

and each member of the Montana Congressional Delegation.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
SJ 17, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17

INTRODUCED BY M. FOX

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